

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, June 15, 1898, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. Wednesday, June 15th., 1898. My dear Alec:

I have just had a letter from Dr. Gordon. He is evidently very anxious to have you come down and thinks this a most critical period in the history of Articulation teaching and says his Doctor is forbidding him to go to Washington also, but he feels he must go even at the risk of his life. Now it seems to me that one of two things must be true. Either Articulation teaching is not worth much or some people are very unnecessarily nervous and to them there will be a continuous succession of "very critical periods" in which great chances of life or death must be taken.

1st., The system of Articulation teaching can't be worth fighting for, if after nearly thirty-five years of demonstration it is still liable to be upset. Thirty-five years is certainly a long enough time for any system to prove it's efficacy, if it hasn't why the utmost you and Gordon could do would be to stave off it's certain death for a few years longer.

If on the other hand the system has proved its worth what's the use of being so worried every time the enemy makes an attack. To be sure it may succeed in gaining an important stronghold, which would be a great misfortune no doubt and prevent the enemy giving its whole attention to pushing the war into the enemy's territory but still if it is firmly intrenched the loss of strongholds won't drive it away. Nor will the death of two of its ablest generals shatter it permanently. Still it would be a dreadful misfortune and one that would do more damage than the loss of several strongholds, for who is to lead the army on to recapture the strongholds and carry the war into the enemy's country? 2 I can't imagine anything under the present circumstances that would be more to Dr. Gallaudet's advantage or more dangerous to the best interests of the cause of articulation than for you and Dr. Gordon to

Library of Congress

come down and get killed. To be sure you may thereby prevent a capture of a stronghold, but I cannot see that that would be a compensation, because with you gone, who's to prevent Dr. Gallaudet's taking them another time?

I heard of Dr. Heidsiek in the papers and have written him inviting him to call on us.

The thermometer has ranged from 75 to 88 on the recording instrument here for the last three weeks, day and night. I don't feel the heat without you to say how hot it is, but people in town feel it.

Please thank Mr. McCurdy for his letters, but I am really too tired to write. I am really writing very hard, — for me —

Lovingly yours, Mabel.